

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 AGR-20 EB-11 SS-20 NSC-10 IO-15

L-03 TRSE-00 OMB-01 IGA-02 H-03 COME-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 /138 W  
----- 096321

O R 131120Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3392

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

CINCPAC HONOLULU

COMUSSAG

S E C R E T PHNOM PENH 11108

FOR STATE/AID

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EGEN, EAID, CB

SUBJECT: CAMBODIAN RICE CRISIS

REF: (A) STATE 203322 (B) PHNOM PENH 8907

1. WE CANNOT CONCUR IN DECISION TO WITHDRAW AUTHORITY TO  
FINANCE PURCHASE LAST 12,500 M/TS THAI RICE.

2. THE NEXT PL 480 RICE FROM THE UNITED STATES IS NOT  
GOING TO ARRIVE IN CAMBODIA IN NOVEMBER. WE WILL BE LUCKY  
IF IT ARRIVES EARLY DECEMBER AND EXPERIENCE WITH THE PRO-  
CUREMENT PROCESS INDICATES THAT IT MAY ARRIVE LATER THAN  
THAT.

3. REALISM ALSO IMPELS US TO CONCLUDE THAT THE KOREAN RICE  
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WILL NOT START ARRIVING HERE UNTIL LATE NOVEMBER. WHILE

IT IS POSSIBLE SOME COULD ARRIVE HERE AS EARLY AS NOVEMBER 16TH,  
IT IS MOST UNLIKELY. BEAR IN MIND ARRIVAL WILL BE DRAWN  
OUT OVER A 30-DAY PERIOD.

4. EVEN IN THE BEST OF CIRCUMSTANCE THE IIAPANCES 5000 TONS,  
FOR WHICH THE AGREEMENT IS NOT YS 8&,3\$, WILL NOT ARRIVE  
BEFORE LATE DECEMBER.

5. OF THE FIRST 12,500 M/T TRANCHE OF THAI RICE, 10,500 M/T  
ONLY ARE EARMARKED FOR PHNOM PENH SINCE 1,000 M/T ARE TO BE  
DELIVERED TO UTAPAO AIRBASE FOR AIR DROPS, AND ANOTHER 1,000  
M/T WILL HAVE TO BE UNLOADED AT KOMPONG SOM TO FEED THE  
MARTIME PROVINCES.

6. AS JUST REPORTED SEPARATELY, WE ARE TRYING TO KEEP DAILYS  
DISTRIBU  
SON DOWN TO 400 TONS PER DAY. IF WE CAN, PRSKENT  
STOCK LEVELS PLUS THE AIRLIFTS FROM BATTAMBANG AND KOMPONG  
CHHNANG CAN CARRY THIS CITY THROUGH TO OCTOBER 24TH OR  
PERHAPS OCTOBER 26TH. AIR

FTING 500 M/TS OF RESERVE RICE  
FROM SAIGON (AS HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY REFERRED TO) WILL HELP  
US LAST OUT THAT WEEK. THE 1800 M/TS OF THAI RICE ON THE  
WING PENG, SOME OF WHICH IS THE INITIAL SHIPMENT OF THE FIRST  
12,500 M/TS THAI PURCHASE, TOGETHER WITH THE GVN LOAN OF  
5,000 M/TS SHOULD PROVIDE STOCK THROUGH NOVEMBER 10TH.  
THE BALANCE OF THE FIRST THAI 12,500 M/TS, THE 10,500 M/TS  
REFERRED TO ABOVE, SHOULD BE EXHAUSTED BY SUNDAY DEMBER  
2ND. PRESERVATION OF PUBLIC ORDER REQUIRES THAT  
AT THE VERY LEAST WE STAY ABOVE A ONE WEEK'S STOCK LEVEL,  
THEREFORE BY THANKSGIVING, AT THE LATEST, ADDITIONAL RICE  
MUST START ARRIVING HERE.

7. SINCE IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE KOREAN RICE, OR THAUNEXT  
AMERICAN PL480 RICE WILL START ARRIVING BY THEN, IT IS  
ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL, IN OUR VIEW, THAT WE RECEIVE IMMEDIATE  
AUTHORITY TO CONTINUE WITH THE PROCUREMENT OF THE SECOND 12,500  
TONS FROM THAILAND. TO UNDERLINE THE NECESSITY OF PROCEEDING WITH  
THE THAI PROCUREMENT, AS WASHINGTON KNOWS, THE MEKONG IS FALLING  
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AND BY THE LATTER PART OF DECEMBER RIVER CONVOY TRAFFIC WILL BE  
HAZARDOUS, WHATEVER RICE WE CANKXXBRUP THE RIVER BEFORE THEN, WE  
SHOULD NOT FAIL TO DET DELIVERED. AS WASHINGTON ALSO IS AWARE,  
THE VIETNAM SITUATION IS NOT MUCH BETTER THAN THE CAMBODIAN  
SITUATION AND WE WILL NEED TO PAY BACK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THE  
5,000 TONS WE ARE BORROWING FROM SAIGON. TO BE TIMELY THAT  
SHOULD COME FROM THE FIRST THAI 12,500 TONS, THE SECOND THAI 12,500  
TONS, THE KOREAN RICE OR PL 480 AT THE LATEST.

8. NEITHER THE POPULATION OF PHNOM PENH NOR THE KHMER GOVERNMENT CAN SUSTAIN INDEFINITELY A HAND-TO-MOUTH SCHEDULE OF RICE DELIVERIES. IF THIS CITY IS GOING TO SURVIVE THE DRY SEASON, STOCKS MUST BE BUILT UP, INITIALLY TO A FEW WEEKS CONSUMPTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. IN THIS REGARD THE THAI 12,500 TONS IS ONLY 314 WEEKS SUPPLY. OUR OBJECTIVE SHOULD BE, ONCE AGAIN, TO BUILD UP TO A 60-DAY STOCK AS SOON AS THAT IS FEASIBLE.

9. WITH REGARD TO OPENING SENTENCE REFTTEL, PLEASE REVIEW REF B WHICH WE DISPATCHED AUG 23. IN IT, WE FORECAST OCT 17 AS THE DATE ON WHICH GOVERNMENT STOCKS WILL BE EXHAUSTED. THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH OUR MORE RECENT MESSAGES AND WITH THE CURRENT SITUATION. IT FORMED THE BASIS FOR OUR WARNINGS AND ANXIETIES. IT IS THE REASON FOR OUR VIEW THAT EXTRAORDINARY MEASURE HAD TO BE TAKEN TO BREAK THE THAI RICE LOOY WC. ON ZIG 23 WE FORECAST THAT UNLESS A U.S. PROCUREMENT AND LOGISTICS TEAM WAS DISPATCHED FROM WASHINGTON TO CAMP IN BANGKOK UNTIL THE RICE WAS BOUGHT AND SHIPPED, THE THAI RICE WOULD NOT ARRIVE ON TIME BUT BANGKOK ASSURED IT WAS NOT NECESSARY. EXTRAORDINARY PRESSURE WAS OF COURSE BROUGHT BY US ON THE GKR AND THEY SENT THEIR FOREIGN MINISTER WITH TWO OTHER MINISTERS AND PRESIDENT OF SONEXIM, ACCOMPANIE BY U.S REPRESENTATIVE FROM PHNOM PENH, TO NEGOTIATE. THE RESULT OF THAT EFFORT IS THE RICE JUST ABOUT TO ARRIVE. WE CANNOT AFFORD TO STOP ANY PART OF IT NOW.

10. IF TIME IS NOT TO BE LOST, IMMEDIATE RESTORATION OF PROCUREMENT AUTHORITY IS NECESSARY SINCE LY KIM HENG IS IN BANGKOK NOW FOR THE PURPOSE OF SIGNING THAT CONTRACT  
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AND ARRANGING SHIPMENT.

11. PLEASE REPLY IMMEDIATE ACTION PHNOM PENH AND ALSO ACTION BANGKOK PASS FRITZSFEDEN.  
ENDERS

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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